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CORIA NT ON

A Nephite Story

BY B. H. ROBERTS

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1902

PREFACE.

Corianton was first published as a serial in the Contributor, 1889. At that time the story was well received by a large circle of readers and the Author was urged by many of his friends to continue in that line of composition, as much good might come of it. A call came to engage in other work, however, and the delightful field just entered had to be abandoned. During the years that have intervened since the first publication of the story, many have inquired if Corianton would not appear in booklet form, to which the Author always replied in the affirmative, but without being able to say when the time of publication would come. Since the simple Nephite story, however, promises to become famous through Mr. O. U. Bean's dramatization



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Preface.

of it, many—I may say very many—have expressed a desire of forming the acquaintance of Corianton as he first appeared; and hence the Author presents Corianton, the Nephite.

CORANTON.

CHAPTER ONE.

THE PRISONER.

The summer's sun was just struggling through the mists that overhung the eastern horizon, and faintly gilding the towers and housetops of Zarahemla. as a party of seven horsemen, evidently weary with the night's travel, were seen slowly moving along the foot of the hill Manti, in the direction of the above named city.

The manner in which the party traveled was evidently by pre-arrangement, and for a purpose. Two rode in advance and two in the rear, while the other three rode abreast, the one in the

*According to Mormonism - some where in
Soul America*

middle being closely guarded by those who rode beside him. A second look showed that his arms were securely bound behind him, and the guard on each side held the powerful horse he rode by means of a strap of raw-hide fastened to the bridle. The prisoner was the most, in fact the only person of striking appearance in the little cavalcade, the others being rather heavy, dull men of serious countenance; the prisoner, however, had an air of boldness and cool defiance which contrasted sharply with the humble aspect of his guards. He sat his horse with an easy grace which gave less evidence of fatigue from the long ride through the sultry night than that exhibited by his guards; the man, indeed, seemed especially adapted for endurance. The head, too, was massive and the countenance striking; the brilliancy of the bold black eyes challenged contest or flashed back defiance, while the peculiar expression about the mouth, half scornful smile.

half sneer, seemed to breathe contempt for all things on which he looked.

The party now came in full view of the city. "At last," with mocked solemnity, exclaimed he that was bound, "the soldiers of Christ and their prisoner behold the holy city, where dwells the great prophet—even God's High Priest, who smites with the words of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips slays the wicked!" and the speaker laughed scornfully, but his guards made no reply.

"Methinks ye soldiers of the king that is to be, give scant homage to a shrine so holy as this—why, think men, this is the abode of God's vicegerent, the headquarters of heaven on earth so to speak! And yet ye move on in full view of this holy shrine unbowed! Down slaves, and worship the place of my sanctuary—so run the words of holy prophets, is it not so?"

Still no answer.

"Yet uncovered and unbowed? Ah, I

forgot, you are from the land of Gideon, where dwells another of these holy prophets—and, it may be, that to worship at this shrine would be treason to your own High Priest! O, thou bright-eyed goddess of liberty, what distraction, what fears must disturb the breasts of the poor, craven wretches who worship aught but thee!”

Further remarks of the scoffer were cut short by the guards in advance urging their horses into a brisk gallop, an example followed by the rest of the party. The good broad road, down which they dashed, sloped gently from the western base of the hill Manti to the gate in the east wall of the city. The road had been cut through a primeval forest, and the strips of woodland on either side of it, still untouched by the woodman's ax, made of it a grand avenue. Here and there to the right and left were lanes leading off to the fields beyond, toward which agricultural laborers were slowly moving to

begin the toil of the day. These turned to look with unconcealed wonder upon the strange party as it dashed past them, and some few turned back to the city, bent on finding out who the prisoner was and what was afoot.

As the party drew rein near the gate, two guards armed with heavy swords and long spears, challenged their entrance, and demanded their business.

“Great God!” exclaimed the prisoner, “and this is the people who boast of their freedom! This is the free city of Zarahemla! and yet here stands the minions of the High Priest and the Chief Judge to question whence ye come and why!”

“We come from the city of Gideon,” said one of the guards of the prisoner, in answer to the questions, “we have in charge Korihor, the anti-Christ, who seeks to destroy religion and subvert all government; we”—

“Thou liest, almost as well as a high priest,” broke in the prisoner; “I seek

but to root out of men's minds the false traditions of the fathers concerning God and Christ, and to make them free! I only"—

"You will do well," quietly replied he whom he had interrupted, "to make your defense before the High Priest and Chief Judge of the city, and not before your own and the city guards." Then turning to the guards of the gate he continued: "We have brought Korihor from the city of Gideon where he was tried"—

"For his virtues," broke in the prisoner.

"—for his offenses," continued the guard, not heeding the interruption. "but the Chief Judge at Gideon hath sent him to the Chief Judge of the whole land in this city, to hear his case, and he"—

"And God's High Priest," spoke up the prisoner, "I charge thee, guard, leave not out the holy prophet, I long to meet in sharp contest the vicegerent on earth of your Christ that is to be—'according to the holy prophets.'"

"Well, then, we seek the High Priest and Chief Judge before whom this man is to be tried," said the guard, evidently vexed with the mocking tone of the scoffer.

"Pass on," said the guard at the gate; "Com," said he to his companion, "conduct these men to the Judgment Hall, give their prisoner to the keeper of the prison, then direct them to the house of the chief judge; I shall wait until you return; and I pray God that this bold man may be silenced, for before now he hath disturbed the quiet of our city not a little."

As the party passed through the massive gateway, Korihor turned to look back at the guard, and raising his voice, said to the crowd which had gathered there rather than to the one whom he addressed, "Guard, tell your good people as they pass in and out of the city, that Korihor, their friend, who would see them free, is in bonds for liberty's sake, and is soon to be tried before an imperious High

Priest and a tyrant judge, for honest disbelief in the foolish traditions of their fathers—tell them this, and ask them if the time has come when all men must be slaves to superstition!" There was an instant buzz of excitement in the crowd, for Korihor was not unknown in Zarahemla. A few months before he had been through that city and had spoken boldly against the prophets and the traditions respecting the coming and Atonement of Christ. Since then he had been traveling through the land of Jershon among the people of Ammon, there he met with little success; for that people bound him and banished him from their lands. From thence he went into the land of Gideon where he sought, as in other places, to stir up sedition. He was brought before the High Priest and Chief Judge of that city, and they being in doubt as to what they ought to do with him, bound him and sent him to the High Priest over the whole church, and to the Chief Judge of the whole land, both of whom resided in the city of Zarahemla.

CHAPTER TWO.

ZARAHEMPLA.

The city of Zarahemla which our party of horsemen and their prisoner had entered, was the capital and metropolis of the Nephite Republic. Its exact location cannot be definitely fixed. According to the Book of Mormon it was situated on the west bank of the river Sidon, a noble stream, supposed to be identical with the river Magdalena. It rises in the great mountain chain of western South America, and flows directly north through an immense valley to the sea. The city Zarahemla was originally founded by the descendants of a colony of Jews that escaped from Jerusalem, after the destruction of that city by King Nebuchadnezzar, early in the sixth century B. C. With the colony of Jews that escaped was Mulek, the son of King Zedekiah, and the colony took its name from him. They landed in the

northern continent of the western world and afterwards drifted southward into the valley of Sidon, and there founded a city, but what name they gave it is not known. Having brought no records with them from Jerusalem, and being in possession of none of those incentives to the preservation of civilization, it is not surprising that they deteriorated to semi-civilized and irreligious conditions. Serious wars broke out among them at times, but they preserved themselves a people, and by the year 200 B. C., had become very numerous. It was about this time that their chief city was discovered by a migrating host of Nephites from the South, led by Mosiah I, whom God had commanded to gather together the more righteous part of the people of Nephi and take them into the land northward. A double purpose was served in this movement: first, the righteous Nephites were relieved from the oppressions practiced upon them by their more vicious brethren; second,

they carried enlightenment, and especially the knowledge of God, to a numerous people. At the time of the arrival of the Nephites in the valley of the Sidon, one Zarahemla was the recognized leader of the descendants of the people of Mulek. It was a Nephite custom to name their cities after the men who founded them, and the surrounding country after the name of the chief city therein. In this instance the Nephites doubtless named the city after the chief man they found there, "Zarahemla," and the surrounding country "the land of Zarahemla." But as suggested, this may not have been the name of the city previous to the advent of the Nephites. The two peoples readily united under the form of government known at that time among the Nephites, viz., a limited and at times elective monarchy. Mosiah, the Nephite leader, became king of the united people. He caused that the people of Zarahemla should be taught in the knowledge of their forefathers; and in

reverence for the God of Israel. Both peoples were greatly benefited by this union. The people of Zarahemla so strengthened the Nephites in numbers as to make them strong enough to resist any attempted invasion of Lamanites; while to the people of Zarahemla the Nephites brought their civilization, their ideas of government, and enlightenment through means of education.

At the time of the opening of our story, 75 B. C., something of a republican form of government or reign of Judges had supplanted the before mentioned monarchy. King Mosiah I. was succeeded by his son Benjamin, and he by his son, under the title of Mosiah II. It was the reign of the last mentioned king that the remarkable revolution took place which resulted in the establishment of the Nephite Republic in place of the kingly form of government which under various modifications had existed from the first Nephi, until about 91 B. C., or some sixteen years previous to the events

recorded in the preceding chapter. The revolution seems to have occurred at that time in consequence of the sons of the second Mosiah refusing to accept the kingly dignity. They had consecrated their lives to the service of the Church, and had departed on missionary expeditions among the Lamanites. The good King Mosiah II. was fearful that if the people elected a king, as was their right under certain contingencies, his sons might subsequently seek to take possession of the throne they had abdicated, and thus bring on civil war. In his anxiety to avoid the possibility of so great a calamity he proposed a change in the constitution by which the kingly form of government should be abolished, and a species of republic established in its place. The principal feature of the new constitution was the provision for the election of a Chief Judge and subordinate Judges, graded most likely according to the importance of the city or district of country over which their

also of the republic. He did not hold the double office long, however; for finding that the office of Chief Judge so occupied his time that it forced neglect upon his duties as High Priest, he resigned his civil position after eight years of service, that he might devote himself exclusively to his ministerial calling. Nephihah was elected to the office of Chief Judge, and held that position at the opening of our story. By this action of Alma's the office of High Priest was separated from that of Chief Judge, still there appears to have been some participation in the affairs of government by the High Priest. Not that there was a union of church and state as that term is usually understood, for the Church was recognized as being separated from the state; but while they were distinct societies, they were close neighbors, and nearly interested in one another; they lived separate, but not estranged; and each helped the other at need. And hence it happened that the High Priest at times sat with the Chief Judge in cases involving the interests of the Church.

CHAPTER THREE.

THE BROTHERS.

Meantime our party passed down one of the principal streets of the ancient city, into the market square. Here many were engaged in unpacking fruits and vegetables from huge baskets strapped across the backs of asses, and arranging them under awnings to preserve them from the scorching rays of the sun. In the richest profusion were piles of fruits and vegetables, luscious grapes and fragrant bananas, lemons, limes, figs, dates, bread-fruit and a variety of vegetables such as the tropics alone can produce. Purchasers were already thronging to the market, and as our party from the city of Gideon passed on, Korihor shouted to them, as he had done to the crowd at the gate, which resulted in quickly gathering a throng of men who eagerly questioned the guards as to the man's offense—"alleged offense, you mean," he cried, "for I am guilty of no

crime, except we have fallen on those evil days to which the idle traditions of our fathers tend, when to disbelieve the words of ancient dotards styling themselves prophets, and giving expression to one's honest thoughts has become a crime; or when resisting the oppression of judges, who ever have one ear turned to a priest to learn what superstition teaches is the word of God, be a wrong; and when to be the friend of liberty, a foe to tyranny whether in priest or judge—and an enemy to an enslaving superstition, is considered worthy of bonds and the prison."

This and much more that he said as he passed along, surrounded by his guards, produced no little excitement in the crowd, for in those ancient days and distant climes, as well as in our own day those who persuaded men they were not well governed had many willing followers; and then as now demagogues, blasphemers and the enemies of law and order knew what a tower of strength

the cry of freedom gave to a cause, however unworthy or destructive of the very thing in the interest of which, ostensibly, they worked.

Having passed through the market-square and through a narrow, irregular street, with massive, two-story stone houses on either side, which marked the most ancient part of the city, the guards suddenly turned to the right into a large square, on one side of which stood an immense structure of hewn stone with a wide, high porch, supported by massive pillars, and approached by a broad flight of stone steps. This was the Hall of Justice, as indicated in an inscription carved in the stone above the porch. To the right of the building extended a high stone wall in which was hung a heavy wooden door, plentifully studded with iron spikes. To this door the guard who had led the party from the east gate of the city directed his footsteps, and taking a small wooden mallet suspended by a chain fastened to the door post, he

struck the door three smart blows, and a moment later a small wicket in the upper part of the door was opened and a harsh voice demanded what was wanted.

"A guard of horsemen from the city of Gideon bring with them to the judgment seat of the High Priest and Chief Judge, one Korihor, charged with seeking to breed sedition and subvert the government; they deliver him to the care of the keeper of the prison—open the door and admit him at once—the people are becoming excited and may raise a tumult." The latter clause of the sentence was delivered hurriedly and in an undertone. There was a profuse rattling of chains, the falling of an iron bar, and the door swung open with a grating sound. Meantime the guards of Korihor had assisted him to dismount, and with their prisoner before them, and leading their horses, passed into the prison-yard. A number of men pressed close after them, but were denied admit-

tance by the gate keeper, who drove them back and closed and barred the door.

Seeing Korihor safely bestowed, and their horses cared for, the guards from Gideon were conducted across the square fronting the Hall of Justice, to the house of the Chief Judge, and presented to him the communication or commitment from the High Priest and Chief Judge of Gideon.

The crowd which had been attracted by the unusual spectacle of the small cavalcade passing through their streets, and the animated speeches of the prisoner, still lingered in the public square, gathered in groups, discussing the events of the morning. "I tell you," said a hard visaged man to a group of listeners standing near the center of the square,— "I tell you there is too much truth in the complaints of Korihor. The High Priests and the Chief Judges are becoming too arbitrary in their rulings; there's too much said about law and order and not

enough regard paid to personal liberty."

"Tut, man," said a voice from the outskirts of the group, "whenever has a disturber of the peace, a blasphemer of God, an enemy to religion come amongst us but what he has taken refuge behind the cry of 'liberty?' So did Nehor in the first year of the reign of the judges; so did Amlici five years later; and Korihor is such as they were, and with like cunning adopts their cry of 'liberty,' when in reality his principles lead to the destruction of freedom and all its safeguards. Believe me friends," he continued, addressing the crowd among whom there began to be great agitation—"Believe me, not every one that cries out against God, religion and the law is a friend to freedom, they are always its enemies. The law stands watch and guard over your rights and liberties; by that Korihor will be judged and justice rendered. In the meantime let not your minds be carried away by the persuasions of men whose business is

agitation, who prosper by violence, and thrive on tumults." So saying, the young man, for such he was, putting his arm about a still younger man who stood at his side, walked away. The crowd also began to break up, the man who had been harangueing it when interrupted, muttering that it could only be expected that the sons of the High Priest would defend the oppressions of their father; they themselves were interested.

As the two young men were crossing the square, the younger said to his brother: "Notwithstanding what you said just now to the crowd, Shiblon, and the truth of it in general, I think this treatment of Korihor is too harsh. Our law protects a man in his belief and in the expression of it; and though Korihor hath a proud bearing and holds what you believe to be dangerous views, still I think the officers at Gideon exceeded their jurisdiction in sending him bound to this city."

"Holds what I believe to be dangerous views! And do not you believe them

to be dangerous? Corianton, I fear the spirit of unbelief, the moral and spiritual poison that the orations of this same man infused into your soul when he first appeared in our city, hath not yet been worked out." The hot blood rushed to the temples of Corianton at this accusation, and he replied with some warmth, not unmixed with bitterness: "It has not been the fault of brother Helaman or yourself, then, for I have heard little else since his departure from Zarahemla but your lame arguments in support of the shadowy traditions of our fathers about the coming of Messiah and his Atonement."

"I am sorry to find you in this mood my brother," replied Shiblon, "and it grieves me to hear you speak so lightly of things that are sacred; but if too much restraint has been thrown upon the liberty of Korihor by the authorities of Gideon, you know full well that justice will be done him in the court of our father and the Chief Judge—you know

that no oppression is countenanced by them."

At this moment the guard from the gate who had conducted those in charge of Korihor to the presence of the Chief Judge passed them, and in answer to a question from Corianton replied that the case of Korihor was appointed to be heard on the morrow.

"It is the time of day," said Shiblon to his brother, "appointed for the meeting of the priesthood, to consider the mission about to be appointed to the Zoramites. Our father sent me to find you and bring you to the council, for I think he wishes you to be a party to the undertaking."

"You may go, brother, but I will not," replied Corianton. "I have no relish for these dull councils, and as for converting the Zoramites, they may be as nearly right in their theology as yourself or our father, for aught I know; the whole subject is so wrapt in mystery that we can at least afford to be liberal, and not bind

men and thrust them into prison for daring to assert their unbelief in these mysterious things."

"But it is the express wish of father that you should attend this council," said Shiblon, "out of respect for him, will you not come?"

"Say, to our good father the Priest, that I am gone to visit one who is cast into prison for the cause of liberty." Then seeing the pained expression in his brother's face, his manner changed, and placing his hand affectionately on his shoulder he said: "Shiblon, go thou to the council, and give no further thought to me; let me follow the bent of my own mind. Your steady patience; your deep conviction as to the truth of the traditions of our fathers: your wisdom and goodness make you a fitting minister for God, if such a being there is; you are destined to become a pillar in the church; not so with me; my wild love of liberty can ill brook the restraints of the gospel or the priesthood, and the

skepticism ingrained in my very nature disqualifies me for the work I could readily believe you were designed to support. But I'll none of it, until I see some manifestation of the power of God, spoken of so frequently by our father and of which the scriptures speak on nearly every page; so farewell." Turning on his heel, he bent his footsteps in the direction of the prison gate, while Shiblon with a troubled heart stood gazing after him.

"David had his Absalom, Lehi, his Laman, and this my brother, my father's darling son, seems destined to wring my father's heart, as they did theirs. Oh! why is it, that those formed in the very prodigality of nature—endowed with a heaven-born intelligence—genius—must be cursed with a doubting, rebellious spirit that weighs down all their better parts, and wrecks the hopes, built on what their talents promise? Oh, that some good angel would my brother meet, as was my father met, shake off his

doubting fears, and give him back to us converted to the truth and pledged to its maintenance, as was my father! Then how would shine that master power within him which overawes men's minds or bends them to his purpose! Brother, flout me, resist me how you will; I'll follow you through all your fortunes, good or ill, and win you yet to God and truth!"

With these words on his lips, and this pious purpose in his heart, Shiblon, the son of Alma the Priest, directed his steps to the council chamber.

CHAPTER FOUR,

IN THE HALL OF JUSTICE.

The next morning the sun shone more brightly than on the day before. Through the night a terrific storm had raged. Black clouds burdened with moisture had been split by vivid flashes of lightning, and poured down all their floods. But with the approach of light the storm ceased, the clouds parted and drifted into great cumulous heaps lightened to snowy whiteness by the glorious morning sun. The air was fresh and pure, the electric storm having dispelled the mists and fogs so common to the tropics.

Long before the sun had reached midway between his rising and high noon, the open square before the Hall of Justice was filled with groups of men, some boisterously disputing the rightfulness of Korihor's treatment, and others with equal warmth defending the action of the authorities of Gideon.

The Hall of Justice was crowded to overflowing with men anxious to see and hear the man, who had by a few leaps and bounds sprung into notoriety. The hall within was circular in form, with tiers of stone seats rising one above the other, their regularity broken only by three promenades extending three-fourths of the way around the building. The entrance was through two wide double doors in the south, along a walk leading into a circular space, around which ranged the first row of seats, and from which ran flights of steps leading to the seats and promenades above. On the west side was a spacious platform with two seats well to the back of it, raised on a dais, evidently intended for the high officials of the state.

A murmur that commenced near the entrance and then extended to all parts of the house, gave notice that some one of importance—perhaps some of the

chief actors in what was to take place that day—were entering. Two men walking side by side and preceded by two guards and followed by two, passed up the short flight of steps to the platform, and occupied the seats before mentioned. One of them was still in the prime of manhood, with a full beard and glossy black hair. The eyes were deep set and black, the forehead low and broad, the lower part of the face square and heavy. The stature of the man was in keeping with the face; below the common height, broad shouldered and ungraceful, the whole aspect was stern, almost harsh—such was Nephihah, the Chief Judge of the whole land. His companion, the High Priest, was a different type of man; tall in person, slightly stooped with age, a high receding forehead, and hair of silvery whiteness. In that face one could see compassion, patience, tenderness—all the qualities in fact that go to make up the highly spiritual temperament. But, as

one may say, back of the indications of those qualities stood others of sterner character. The closely compressed lips, together with the whole form and movement was expressive of determination; while the light that flashed from the eyes when animated, bespoke a quick spirit within. But now as he takes his seat by the side of the Chief Judge, his whole air is calmness, almost sadness; and indeed, care had drawn many and deep lines in the noble face of Alma.

Neither of these officers, though the foremost men in the great Nephite Republic, wore any badge of office; but was dressed very similar to hundreds of common people in the hall. The dress consisted of a sort of tunic drawn over a close fitting under garment, gathered in at the waist by a girdle and extending to the knees, but leaving the arms and legs bare. Over the tunic was generally thrown a light robe, very often of rich material and varying in color to suit the taste of the wearer; on the feet

sandals were worn, fastened to the feet and legs by broad thongs of tanned deer hide—such was the male dress of that period among the Nephites. The chief judge's tunic was of light brown, with a dull red robe thrown over the shoulders. The tunic of the high priest was white and his robe a light blue gathered in graceful folds about his person.

At a signal from the Chief Judge one of the guards left the hall and soon returned, conducting to the platform Korihor and the guards who brought him from Gideon, a few others following—friends of the accused. Among the latter there was one whose graceful form towered above the rest, whose step was more firm, and whose every limb and feature and movement seemed conscious of power and pride. As he followed Korihor up the steps to the platform and stood near him, the High Priest started from his seat—there was a convulsive twitching of the fine features, and then the tears stole silently down his furrowed

cheeks. He had recognized his son Corianton, as the follower of this unbeliever. He was aware that his son had called upon him the day before, knew that he had expressed some sympathy for him, but he was not prepared to see him thus openly identify himself with the cause of the scoffer against God.

As Korihor took his place before the Chief Judge the latter unrolled a parchment which contained the charges against him, as set forth by the authorities of Gideon.

"Korihor," said he, the voice was strong and harsh, "you are charged, by the authorities of the land of Gideon with having sought to stir up sedition, disrupt the government and destroy religion. It doth not appear, however, that you have set on foot any definite movement, or organization looking to the accomplishment of these unworthy purposes. It cannot be said you are guilty of any overt act in pursuance of your pernicious doctrines, but have merely

agitated for them by your speeches. Our law cannot punish a man for his belief nor for the expression of it, therefore it is our decision that you be set at liberty. However, it becomes my duty to caution you that the path you tread is filled with danger, both to yourself and those you may induce to follow you. Let me remind you that our present system of government has been most fruitful of happiness to the people, and holds out to them the fairest promise of future good; and he who becomes its enemy, becomes the enemy of the people, and in the end must come to sorrow. Let not, therefore, your love of notoriety, or any other motive, betray you into seeking it, by paths so pregnant with danger to yourself should you fail, and so disastrous to the public weal should you succeed. You are acquitted before the law of the land; but the High Priest may have some advice for you."

"Acquitted by the law of the land—now I suppose I am to be tried by the

law of—heaven!” said Korihor. “Well, we’ve heard from earth, now we are ready to hear from heaven—what a pity the other place,” pointing significantly downward, “is not also represented, we would then have a trinity of you to hear from. Proceed heaven!” said he, turning to the High Priest.

“Korihor,” said the High Priest, “your speech ill becomes your intelligence, your”—

“What, has a priest turned flatterer! can a priest speak to an opponent in fair, well-seeming words? You know well to whom you speak—one who will not kneel in the dust before you—one who fears neither you nor your gods, but whose soul abhors you both, and is free from your superstition and the slavish submission it begets, else we should have had thunder from ‘God’s mouth-piece,’ and not the mellifluous tones breathing softly—‘Korihor, your speech ill becomes your intelligence;’ but go on,

speak as is your wont, I despise your flattery as I defy your power.”

“Think not I meant to flatter,” continued the High Priest, unmoved by the rude interruption, “for I meant to say, had you listened patiently, that your utterances are but the vain repetition of what others of like temperment have said before you. You scarcely do more than repeat, parrot-like, the catch phrases of Nehor and Amlici, your immediate predecessors in this ribaldry of blasphemy.”

This was a conclusion of the sentence Korihor had scarcely expected, and the scoffer felt that his impetuosity had placed him at a disadvantage.

“Why do you go about to destroy the people’s belief in God and their hope in Christ?” continued the High Priest.

“To undeceive them, to free them from a groveling superstition, which lows down their souls that they dare not assert their rights and liberties, nor

raise their heads in manly pride, nor gratify their appetites, lest they offend the God of your tradition—a being who never has been seen or known, nor ever will be. I seek to strike off the servile chains, with which your priests have loaded them, in order to bring to pass your own designs—that you may glut yourselves with the labors of their hands, and hold them at your mercy. I would see men free from superstition, acknowledging no power more potent than their own. I would teach them that intelligent management is providence, that genius is God; that this life—so far as we know—terminates existence, and therefore they should encompass all the pleasure possible, by enjoying what the appetites and passions crave. I tell thee, proud priest, now playing at humility,” he exclaimed with sudden vehemence, “your religion is slavery; your priesthood, a fraud; your Christ, a delusion; your God, a lie!”

The great audience grew breathless at

the fierce denunciation, and then the calm but strong voice of the High Priest rang through the hall—“Could a deception, a lie produce such supreme joy in the hearts of men as the faith of this people in God does?”

“Yea it could, and the proof of it is in that it does; but the joy this people think they have is not joy; man never tastes joy until he breaks away from all restraint, and feels himself accountable to no one for his actions, then and then only is he capable of joy.”

“’Tis a lying spirit prompts thee so to answer,” replied Alma, “for never while sense and judgment keep their seat in the mind of man can he cast off restraint, or become dead to the sense of moral responsibility; therefore what you would call joy would be the wild delirium of the madman or the drunken—long may this people be preserved from such joy as this—its spirit is drawn from hell, its effect is destruction. Equally false is your statement that the priests glut them-

selves on the labors of the people. From the commencement of the reign of the judges, seventeen years since, until now, I have labored with my own hands for my support; and notwithstanding all my travels for the Church, and labors in it, I have never received even one senine for my labors, nor have my brethren, save it were in the judgment seat; and then we have received only according to the law for our time. What doth it profit us to labor in the Church, then, but to declare the truth, that we might have happiness in the prosperity of our people?"

The scoffer was silent at the calmness of the high priest; something in the manner of Alma moved him strangely, but he stared boldly in the face of the speaker. Corianton, however, manifested more uneasiness, for under the calm exterior he saw the spirit in his father awakening.

"Korihor," said the High Priest, and there was an intensity in the voice now which thrilled the whole assembly, "you

mock at religion, you deny the existence of God, but I testify to you there is a God, and now will you deny his existence or blaspheme his name?"

"Yea, that I will! What, thinkest thou because a High Priest says in solemn tones, 'I tell thee, Korihor, there is a God,' that I will crouch at his feet and confess what ye would call my sins, and like an echo say "amen" to your testimony? By the gods, if such there be, you must think my spirit easily over-awed! I tell thee no, there is no God—ye have no evidence that there is—give me proof of his existence—let me see a manifestation of his power—show me a sign!"

"All things testify of his existence. The traditions of our fathers affirm it"—

"The traditions of our fathers!" contemptuously broke in Korihor, "I demand a living sign, and you talk to me of tradition!"

—"The written testimony of many of the prophets from the beginning of the world to the time our fathers left Jeru-

saalem, as recorded upon the brass plates they brought with them into this land, prove his existence; the testimony of all the holy prophets that God hath raised up to minister to this people declare it; and back of these witnesses stands all nature—the earth with its wealth of fruits and flowers and vegetation and animal life; the rains which make it fruitful, the glorious sun, which kisses its fruits and grains to ripeness; day and night, seed-time and harvest—all proclaim the Creator and his goodness and wisdom and love! The existence and harmonious movement through space of many other worlds than ours, in such exact order and regularity, proclaim his power and glory; and more than all, the still small voice of the Spirit of God, testifying to the secret soul of man of the being of God and man's accountability to him—all these things united give ample proof of God's existence and power and majesty. Yet there stands a man," and he pointed his

finger at Korihor, and addressed himself to the audience, "who denies there is any proof; turns from all this and impiously demands a sign!"

The scoffer stood awed before the awful form of the priest; and well indeed he might, for he had risen in delivering the above; his face shone with intelligence, his eyes reflected the light of heaven, his voice trembled with the power of God; and the form drawn up to its full height was magnificently grand.

"I—I do not say—there is—no God," faltered Korihor in subdued, husky tones, and trembling from fear—"I do not believe there is,—I will not believe"—recovering some of his boldness—"except ye show me a sign!"

"Then this shall be thy sign—I tell thee, in the name of God, thou shalt be dumb and never speak again!"

The voice was trumpet toned now, and seemed to shake the building and the whole audience had started to its feet. There was a half stifled exclamation from

7 the scoffer, and he wildly clutched the air; his eyes seemed bursting from their sockets and his face was purple with his effort to speak. Those who had stood with him drew back as if by instinct, and he stood alone writhing under his curse. Exhausted at last by violent contortions of his whole frame, he became more calm; and in answer to the question by the Chief Judge—

“Art thou now convinced of the existence of God?”

He wrote an answer, saying that he was; that he knew there was a God, but the devil had deceived him by appearing to him as an angel of light, that he had taught his words because they were pleasing to the carnal mind, and his success made him believe, finally, that they were true. He pleaded piteously that the High Priest would remove the curse, but Alma replied:

“If this curse should be taken from thee, thou wouldst again lead away the

hearts of this people; therefore it shall be unto thee, even as the Lord will.”

Korihor looked around him, but no one gave him recognition as a friend; those who had accompanied him into the hall stood terror stricken, and amazement was depicted in every countenance. He realized that he was deserted in this his extremity, and with a gurgling cry he fled from the hall and the city.

The vast audience which had breathlessly witnessed this remarkable scene and the demonstration of the power of God, began to break up, and quietly leave the hall, each person too deeply impressed with what he had witnessed to speak to his neighbor. The Chief Judge and the High Priest were among the last to depart. As the latter was approaching the door his robe was clutched, and turning round he stood face to face with his wayward son—Corianton.

CHAPTER FIVE.

THE NEW CONVERT.

For a moment father and son faced each other, but neither spoke. The proud head of Corianton was bowed, his lips quivered with emotion. The father held out his hand, and the young man grasped it. "Father," he said, in humbled tone, "I have sinned against God, and against thee; I pray you pardon me, and ask thy God to pardon me, too."

"Corianton, thy rebellion against God is in truth a grievous sin. But youth is thoughtless and wayward, impatient of restraint, easily misled, and often, too, by generous impulses. The high sounding phrase, the reckless plea for unbridled license, miscalled liberty, of which men of Korihor's type well know the influence, the mocking jests at sober, righteous lives, the boldness which dares mock at sacred things, and bid defiance even to God, hath in it a false daring which captures inconsiderate youth, and

works its ruin. I do remember my own youth, Corianton, and how in my mad folly I threw away restraint, consorted with the wicked, mocked the righteous, and impiously blasphemed the name of God, and afflicted my noble father's soul as thou hast mine—but I forgive thee," hastily added the Priest, as a great sob escaped his son, "as he did me; and so far as my earnest prayer can pluck down God's forgiveness on thy head, be assured, my son, my most dear son, God shall forgive thee, too." With these words he fondly embraced Corianton, and a few moments later they left the Hall of Justice together.

At the house of the High Priest they found Ammon, Aaron, Omner and Himni, and also Helaman and Shiblon, the two elder sons of Alma. The first four persons named were the sons of Mosiah, the last king of the Nephites, at whose death the reign of the judges began. These men had been the companions of Alma from his boyhood, and together in their youthful days they had been reck-

lessly wicked and sought the destruction of the Church, as already detailed in chapter two. After their conversion they had traveled to and fro through all the land of the Nephites, seeking to undo the mischief they had done; and then performed glorious missions among the Lamanites where the power of God had been wondrously manifested to the converting of many of that people to the truth. Often separated in their labors, cast into prisons, surrounded by dangers, threatened by mobs, weary, foot-sore, hungry—now received into palaces and hailed almost as Gods, now outcasts, without a place to lay their heads—they experienced all the changes, the successes, and the vicissitudes of missionary life, but through all of it they were faithful to God, and held each other in fondest remembrance.

The present occasion of their meeting together was to determine what steps should be taken in relation to the Zoramites, a people who had dissented from the Nephites and had established them-

selves at Antionum, south of the land Gershon, and bordering on the lands occupied by the Lamanites; and it was feared they would become confederate with the Lamanites and create trouble. The meeting held on the subject the day before had been interrupted by the Chief Judge sending for Alma to consult over the case of Korihor. Now they had met to conclude the business thus interrupted.

Alma was warmly greeted by his brethren, who had witnessed the scene in the Hall of Justice; and all expressed their gratitude to God for the great manifestation of his power, and the vindication of his cause.

"The most happy fruit of this issue," said Alma, "is that it gives back to us my son Corianton; who, at first, stood with the unbeliever, but now has seen a demonstration of God's power, to the conversion of his soul." At this announcement the brethren gathered about Corianton and warmly embraced him,

thanking God for his deliverance from darkness.

It was finally arranged that Alma, Ammon, Aaron, Omner together with Shiblon and Corianton, should go on a mission to the Zoramites; that Himni should remain to preside over the church at Zarahemla, assisted by Helaman.

As the council was breaking up, Alma suggested that he would like to take with him on this mission Amulek and Zeezrom, but they were in the city of Melek, west of Zarahemla. Corianton volunteered to go after them, and Shiblon expressed a willingness to accompany him. That afternoon they started.

En route they passed through several villages, and on such occasions were everywhere questioned in relation to the curse which had fallen upon Korihor, of which they had heard conflicting rumors. The young men gave to those inquiring correct information, though Corianton in testifying to the existence of God, and to the truth, was not always as humble or merciful to those who were not yet con-

verted as was conformable to the spirit of the gospel, or consistent with the position which he himself had so lately occupied. It is ever thus with your new convert; by his actions and by his words you would be led to think, if you did not know better, that he was the last sinner God was waiting to bring into his fold before he damned the rest. Shiblon observed these faults in his brother, but knowing his haughty spirit, which could ill brook restraint, he resolved to remain silent, and let those older correct him.

Finding Amulek and Zeezrom, they delivered their message from the council of the priesthood in Zarahemla, and both these worthy men returned with them to that city, and from thence the party took its journey to Antionum, the chief city of the Zoramites.

Of that journey it is necessary to say but little. It occupied eight days, the party going on foot, driving with them but two asses, on which were packed the tents, food and other necessary articles

for the comfort of the party. For the sons of Mosiah and Alma, who were all experienced missionaries, and had passed through many trying scenes together, as also, indeed, had Amulek and Zeezron, it was a glorious reunion; and many and various were the adventures and special manifestations of the power of God related. To the younger men, Shiblon and Corianton, it was a feast of spiritual food—the conversation of these servants of God.

CHAPTER SIX.

THE ZORAMITES.

The sun was slowly sinking in the western sky, as the party of missionaries presented themselves at the main entrance to the city Antionum, the gateway of the north wall. They were permitted to pass in unchallenged, and inquired out a lodging house, where they all stayed together. Uninformed as to the exact nature of the heresy of the Zoramites, they had resolved to avoid proclaiming their mission, until they should become acquainted with the nature of the errors it was their hope to correct.

The day following their entrance into the city was the holy day of the Zoramites, when they repaired to the synagogues, of which there were many, to worship. The interior of their places of worship was gorgeously decorated. Near the center of each rose a stand, the top of which extended half the height from the floor to the ceiling. The stand

proper rested on a sort of frustum of a cone. Up the sides were several flights of steps, and at the top of the frustum was standing room for a number of people; but in the stand proper there was room for but one. Each in his turn ascended the single flight of steps to the top of this holy stand—Rameumptom they called it—and stretching forth his hands towards heaven, exclaimed in solemn tones:

Holy, Holy, Holy God!

Thou art God, There is no God beside.

Spirit Bright, and Everlasting—

The same to-day and ever more.

Separate are we from men—

Elected us hast Thou and made us holy,

While all beside thou hast condemned;

For which, Most High, and Holy God

we give Thee thanks—

That we are not as other men.

Separated are we from false traditions of the Christ—

That deep blasphemy of corrupted Nephites,

Who know not Thee as Spirit-God:

But as a man expect to see Thee

Come on earth, and all mankind redeemed!

For deliverance from such traditions vile
Most High and Holy God—I give Thee thanks!

Amen, amen, amen!

At the conclusion of every distinct thought in the above prayer, the company of worshippers at the top of the frustum would cry aloud—"Amen, amen!" And at the conclusion of the prayer an unseen choir accompanied by instruments, chanted selected and slightly altered passages of the above prayer, such as—

"Holy, holy God! Thou art God. Thou are holy. Thou are spirit, and ever shall be—Holy is thy name! Amen! amen!"

Such was their form of worship, such their set prayers, as witnessed that day by Alma and his fellow missionaries.

After witnessing this mixture of im-

piety and hypocrisy, self-glorification, and abasement of those not of them, Alma thought it not necessary to wait longer in commencing the work, and hence, that night he laid hands upon the heads of his associates, blessed them and set them apart for the accomplishment of the work in hand. The next morning they separated for the better prosecution of their enterprise. They took no thought of themselves, what they should eat, or where they should be lodged. They preached in the synagogues, in private houses, and even in the streets.

No one in the beginning of this work was more zealous, or more successful than Corianton. Indeed it was his success that began to work a great mischief; for it filled him with pride and boasting in his own strength. By the force of his brilliancy, and a kind of genius for controversy, he discomfited the Zoramites, and exposed the shallowness of their principles to the great delight of the multitude who, though they believed not the message he was delivering,

were immensely pleased with the youthful orator.

There were fundamental truths of the gospel, however, to which Corianton himself was not converted; the atonement of Christ, the resurrection, the justice of God in punishing the wicked, being among them. He found, as many since his day have found, that seeing a single manifestation of the power of God—a miracle—had not removed all the difficulties in the way of a sound faith in the gospel; and in his own mind he began to find ways of accounting for the destruction of Korihor's speech—his own excitement, the mysterious magnetism of his father which swayed men's minds, a power which he flattered himself he had inherited, notwithstanding his unbelief.

One day about sunset, while in this frame of mind, as he was passing down one of the main thoroughfares of Antionum, he saw a poor, wretched object begging of those who passed him on the street. He was miserably clad and filthy.

his form emaciated and trembling with weakness, but there was something in the profile of the face, a resemblance to a countenance which lived in Corianton's recollection, that attracted his attention. As he approached nearer he observed a wildness about the man, occasioned by desperate efforts at speech, resulting only in harsh, disconnected and unintelligible mumbling. To his astonishment, it was Korihor. The form was wasted, the features shrunken almost past recognition, and insanity glared from his wild eyes. Corianton gazed in pity upon him, and Korihor returned that look with one of puzzled wonder. Then as the mists and confusion of his mind cleared up for the moment, he recognized his former, and what he accounted his false friend, and with a wild shriek fled out into the street, looking back at Corianton as he ran with an air expressive of horror. At that moment a troop of horsemen was passing down the street, and so sudden had been the poor half maniac's flight from the presence of

Corianton, that he threw himself in front of the horsemen, and before they could check their speed or change their course, he was knocked down and trampled upon.

A crowd quickly gathered around the bruised and bleeding form. His case was notorious in Antionum, and it was generally believed that his dumbness was brought upon him through sorcery; hence, even while he was shunned by the people, there were many who sympathized with him, so far, at least, as execrating those who had been the means, as they thought, of bringing the evil upon him. Corianton ran to the man and raised him to a sitting posture, but he never regained consciousness; a few painful gasps, and the body sank back into the arms of the young man, limp and lifeless. One of the guards of the city came up to the crowd, and, recognizing the body as that of the dumb, half-crazed beggar, he took charge of it, and finally interred it.

As Corianton walked away with the

mangled form of the once bold anti-Christ vividly pictured in his mind, he muttered half aloud—"This is one of the judgments of God—cruel, infinitely cruel! He above all others could have been generous and have pardoned him before his justice," and he fairly hissed the word, "had turned to cruelty!"

By this time he had reached his lodgings, one of the finest palaces in all that city, and strange enough, it was the home of one of the chief Zoramites who had been especially pleased, or at least feigned to be especially pleased, with Corianton, and had invited him to make his house his home. At the entrance to the walk leading up to the house, he was met by a woman, who asked if he was one of the Nephite prophets that had come to preach the doctrines of the Nephites to the Zoramites. Corianton answered that he was of that party. "And is your name Corianton?"

"Yes, that is my name."

"Then at last I have found you!"

CHAPTER SEVEN.

JOAN.

Was the woman who accosted Corianton at the gate of his lodging, young, beautiful? He could not tell; the twilight had deepened too much into the shadow of night, to permit him to see clearly; but there was a fascination in the full, sweet tones of her voice, and he was thrilled by the touch of her soft hand, as she laid it gently on his arm, as if to detain him while asking the questions with which the last chapter closed.

"You are going to Seantum's?"

"Yes, that is where I lodge."

"I will go with you."

He hesitated, and was not a little astonished at her perfect self-possession, which, to his thinking, bordered on boldness. It must be remembered that among the Nephites, one of the chief characteristics of their women, so far as one is able to judge from their annals,

was modesty—an excellent thing in woman, when not feigned or prudish. The freedom, therefore, with which this woman had accosted him, a perfect stranger, and now proposed to go with him, uninvited, to the place where he lodged, was a boldness to which Corianton was unaccustomed. She observed that he hesitated, and broke out into a light, silvery laugh.

“Ah, I forgot,” she said, in an apologizing tone, yet with a touch of mockery in it, “thou art one of the prophets, perhaps a solemn one, and unacquainted with our people, and my manners are too bold. But Seantum, with whom you lodge, is a near kinsman—my father’s brother; now, will you throw open the gate, and allow me to go in with you?”

He complied with her request mechanically, and in silence, for he knew not what to say. As they approached the house he again felt that soft hand laid gently on his arm, and the same sweet voice said, almost pleadingly: “Let us not go into the house yet, the evening

is beautiful; see, the moon is just peeping over the tree tops, and floods the earth with her soft light—let us walk in the garden.” She had retained her hold upon his arm, and obeying her will rather than his own, he turned down a path leading away from the house.

The house of Seantum was situated at the southern outskirts of the city, in the midst of a spacious and splendid garden. There were extensive lawns, studded with tropical trees, several species of palms and plantain; the cocoa trees standing in groups, their great tufts of gigantic leaves rustling in the moonlight at the height of sixty and seventy feet; banana and papaw trees growing side by side in rows along the walks, and back of them in irregular order stood pomegranates, while here and there were clumps of lindens, interspersed with sumach and cashew, and a great variety of evergreen shrubbery. Here side by side, and in fine contrast, were rhododendrons, with their rose-colored flowers, and the

coffee shrub with its clusters of delicate white blossoms. Other flowers and flowering trees there were in great profusion—the fragrant eglantine, the elegant, airy though thorny acacia, and now and then an aloe plant, and, ah, rare sight! several of them were in full bloom; these, with splendid magnolias, mingled their odors; and burdened the air with ambrosial fragrance, which, with the chirrup and hum of insect life, the gentle whispering wind, stealing softly through shrubbery and tree, and all kissed to beauty by the glorious moonlight, made up a night such as lovers love, and love's young dream expands.

“You are not at all curious,” said Corianton's new-found companion. “You have not yet asked my name, nor why I am here, nor what it is I want with you—you have not spoken half a dozen words since we met—you smile, do you mean by that I have not given you a chance to say more?”

“Such were my thoughts, lady, but I

would know your name, and am most curious to know what you would with me.”

By this they had reached a lakelet at the lower end of the garden, from whose moist beach grew several gigantic mango and sycamore trees. They had passed in the shadow of one of the latter whose inclining trunk extended far out over the water-lily bedecked lake. Half seating herself on the inclined tree, she raised her hand to clutch a grape vine that drooped from a branch above, and as she did so the ample folds of her sleeve slipped back and left uncovered a beautiful white arm. And now Corianton noticed for the first time that the form was supple and finely proportioned. Her head, too, had been covered with a kind of mantilla which had also partly shrouded her face; this fell back now, revealing a face of uncommon loveliness, and a profusion of brown hair.

“You must know then, sir prophet,” she said with a light air, “that I am Joan,

from Siron; my father is a Nephite by birth, but when young met with my mother, taken captive during a war with your people. He fell in love with the captive, married her and she induced him to go with her to her people. They settled in Siron where they lived happily until my mother died. My father still lives, and has never been entirely rid of the traditions of the Nephites, and hearing that a party of Nephite prophets were preaching in Antionum, it was his wish that I should come to our kinsman Seantum, find you, and ask that you would also preach in Siron."

"But why did you come to me? I do not lead our party, I am youngest in it."

"Ah, sir prophet, you are more famous than you know. It was Corianton that we first heard of in Siron; it is he whose eloquence most baffles the Zoramites, and threatens the disruption of their church—believe me, sir, I was charged by my father to bid you come."

Oh, flattery! what man is proof against thy sweet, seducing charms! And how

those charms are heightened, when flattery falls from beauty's lips! The vanity of Corianton was well pleased with the words of the woman; pride swelled his bosom, and he felt exalted above his brethren.

"For two days I have sought you" (Corianton had been absent two days from his lodgings), "now I have found you and delivered my message, will you go to Siron?"

"I cannot say, lady, I must first confer with my brethren, and if by them it is thought best, I—"

"What! are you not free to come and go where and when you like. Are you in bondage?"

"No, lady, not in bondage, yet it is mete I counsel with my associates, and if—"

"And 'if' they give you leave, why then you'll go! Ah me, that is such liberty as a maiden has under her father's control. I've often wished myself a man, that I might have a more extended liberty, but if men cannot act independent of con-

trol, it pleases me that I am a woman. I fear, Sir prophet, that I shall never be a convert to your faith."

"Then I would esteem my success in Siron of little value though I gained the whole people, if I failed to number one so fair among those who followed me."

"Come, sir, let us now go in; you begin to find your tongue, and even a prophet, I see, can flatter."

So saying she drew her mantle over her head, and they walked in silence towards the house.

Corianton, as he walked away, did not observe shadowy forms glide from under adjacent trees, hold a brief consultation and depart from the spot which he himself had just quitted.

CHAPTER EIGHT.

THE REVEL.

As Corianton and Joan approached the house, lively strains of music floated out upon the evening air, and lights gleamed from all the windows; now sounds of revelry could be heard—the merry laugh, and flying feet. In the hall they were met by Seantum. "Returned home at last, Corianton, eh?" he said with blustering familiarity, "what, and with Joan, too!"

"Yes, kinsman; I found our prophet as he was entering the grounds, and have detained him long enough to deliver my message."

"Quite right, too, quite right; if you have anything to do, do it, and do it at once, say I. But come, sir, some young people have gathered here, to make merrry the night, recreation will do you good, sir; youth was made for enjoyment, sir, and youth cheats itself if it make not good use of its time."

"Oh, kinsman, you forget!" said Joan. "This man, though he hath not a gray beard, or a stooped back—and though he hath no staff, yet is he a holy man! and will account the youthful revels you commend, as sinful. Alas," said she, with charming mock solemnity,—“alas, that youth should so soon wed itself to the vocation of the aged! Besides, I warrant me, he will tell thee he must first counsel with his fellow-prophets, before he can stir in what you would have him enjoy. So pray forbear, tempt not the holy prophet!" And with this tantalizing witchery she left him.

Seantum laughed heartily at the evident discomfiture of Corianton. "By my life, sir, she hath hit you as hard with her sarcasm of your solemnities, as your ridicule hits the weakness of our Zoramite faith; but come, sir, come, you must rally, you must let her see that you have spirit—which I know you have—go in, sir," lowering his voice, "it shall not harm your reputation; go in, you

shall find beauty, gaiety, pleasure and secrecy beneath my roof—go in, sir; youth was made for pleasure!"

His pride, wounded by the light sarcasm of Joan, and, influenced, it must also be confesed, by the cajolery of Seantum, Corianton permitted himself to be led down the hall into a spacious saloon, brilliantly lighted by cressets, and at one end of which, on a platform, was arranged a banqueting table, laden profusely with all the delicacies of the tropics—a rich variety of meats, fruits and wines, of which all were free to partake at pleasure. The ceiling and wall of the saloon were frescoed with voluptuous figures or grim monsters, half animal, half human—with here and there indications that some knowledge of the old mythologies was still retained; the windows were draped with curtains of rich stuffs, variously colored; their ample folds gently stirred by the soft breeze which stole into the room, filling it with the rich perfumes of the garden. The floor was variegated Mosaic work, smooth

as polished ivory, covered at the sides and ends by soft carpeting.

As Corianton and Seantum entered the saloon, a pretty dark-eyed girl was executing a sort of fandango to the evident delight of a number of young men sitting or lounging promiscuously about the room. At the conclusion of the dance the girl was greeted warmly with a round of applause. Then there was quiet, broken occasionally by light ripples of laughter, the hum of confused conversation, or occasional commands to the slaves to serve fruits or wines. There were whispered nothings, tender caresses, and loose jests. Groups of women of all degrees of beauty were reclining on divans or cushions, half concealed by the rich foliage of gigantic plants in great vases; and sometimes in recesses nearly shut out from the main body of the saloon by closely drawn curtains.

The entrance of Seantum and Corianton had attracted no attention; but as the tall, graceful Nephite passed the

various groups, the girls broke out in exclamations of admiration — “how handsome!” “how young!” “what fine eyes!—and what a form!” “who is he?” “a stranger—a Nephite.” All this agitated Corianton, and rendered him uneasy. Arriving at the head of the saloon, he was introduced to a group of young men about his own age.

“This is my Nephite prophet of whom you have heard me speak,” said Seantum, “receive him as my honored guest and friend.” At this Corianton was warmly saluted, and called upon to pledge the acquaintance in wine. There was no retreating now, nor could there be any refusal.

“Though our new friend is a Nephite,” said Seantum, after the pledge of friendship had been drunk, “and reared under traditions which we have forsaken, religious differences, arising solely from training in childhood, should make no difference in social life.” “No, no,” broke in several voices. “Let us bury thoughts of all such differences in an-

other bowl of wine," said a youth of Lamanitish appearance, and already under the influence of the beverage he now called for.

At that moment in the lower part of the saloon some one was greeted by hearty applause; looking in that direction Joan was seen advancing clad in loose, fleecy garments; she held in her hand a long strip of crimson gauze, and as she reached the middle of the saloon she shook out its folds and began a dance of exquisite grace.

What mischief hath not been worked by the witching grace exhibited by beautiful women in the dance! The elegance and harmony of motion, the poetry of movement, gives a lustre to beauty and influences the senses through the imagination. 'Twas the dancing of the fair daughter of Jared which drove Akish of old to pledge himself to murder King Omer among the Jaredites; and men hereafter shall promise with an oath anything to the half of a kingdom, to some fair one for dancing before them.

Never had Corianton seen such a combination of motion and beauty as that now before him. The slight willowy form of Joan swaying with easy grace, the poise of the head, the movement of the arms, all in perfect harmony with the rest of her actions. Frequently the company applauded her, but now evidently the dance is drawing to a close, concluding with rapid whirling round the entire saloon. As she passed near Corianton she suddenly threw her gauze scarf over his head, as a challenge for him to join her in the finale; and he, forgetful of all but her loveliness and bewitching grace, caught her hand, holding the tips of her fingers, and accompanied her in that whirling circuit. He had evidently acquitted himself well, for he shared in the applause which greeted her, and the compliments that followed.

"Ah, my friend, I scarcely thought a prophet could do so well," she whispered, in her taunting manner; but seeing that he turned pale at her remark, and that a pained expression also passed over his

features, she quickly added "you did well, I am proud of you, and you must be my companion for the night;" and her hand once more stole within his arm.

The revels were continued through the night, wine flowed as freely as water, and long before the gray dawn began to break in the east, many had sunk down in a helpless, drunken sleep. Corianton also was intoxicated, but not so much with wine as with the beauty and chic of Joan. When she left him, as she did soon after midnight, he began to realize the situation into which his half thoughtless indiscretion had plunged him, and he knew not how he would well answer his brethren for his conduct. Though he had drunk but little wine, not being accustomed to it his brain was on fire, and a mad spirit of recklessness seized him. Passing a group of young fellows in an advanced stage of intoxication in one of the recesses of the saloon, he was hailed by them, and congratulated upon his conquest of the fairest lady in all their land. He joined them in their

praises of her beauty and in their revel. What he did, what was done he knew not, his brain was confused—he had an indistinct recollection of boisterous, frenzied jollity, then high words, a quarrel, but not the reason of it, and then all was darkness, oblivion.

CHAPTER NINE.

ISABEL.

As the grey light of morning struggled through the heavy curtained windows of the saloon, Corianton awoke. For some time he lay half bewildered, unable to call to mind what had happened, or where he was, conscious only of the heavy, dull pain in his head. At last, however, the revels of the past night were conjured up by his recollection; but awakening consciousness brought with it a sickening sense of shame. He was lying on a cushioned divan in one of the many recesses opening into the saloon, and near him in a heavy stupor, on the floor, was a young Lamanite girl. He arose and staggered from the recess to seek the open air. In the saloon the lights in the cressets were burning low, but giving out sufficient of their pale, yellow light to reveal the general disorder that prevailed. Fruits, drinking bowls, withered flowers and ottomans lay

Isabel.

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scattered about promiscuously. The banquet table itself with its burden of fruits and wines and silver furniture, had been overturned, doubtless in the melee which followed the quarrel, of which Corianton had but an indistinct recollection. Near the door leading into the hall were two slaves sleeping in each other's arms—worn out by the services of the past night.

Corianton wended his way through all this debris and at last reached the garden; but neither the cool morning air, the song of birds nor the perfume of flowers brought relief to his aching heart or troubled mind.

He followed the same path down which Joan had led him the night before to the margin of the lake, and stood under the same trees where her loveliness first attracted his attention. Again he saw her half reclining against the tree, once more heard her sweet voice deriding his faith and mocking at the bondage it brought with it—"What, are you not free? Are you in bondage? she had said;

and the humiliation he had experienced by the taunting question still hurt his pride. He sought a bower near at hand, and stretching himself upon a seat beneath it, was soon lost in a fitful slumber.

He was suddenly awakened by some one in a subdued but hurried tone calling his name. Shaking off his sleep at last, he was surprised and not a little troubled at seeing his brother Shiblón standing over him.

"Wake, brother, wake and leave this horrible place!" The speaker was pale and evidently much excited. "Come brother, in the name of God shake off this slumber, and come with me before it is too late!"

"Why Shiblón, what's amiss?"

"Alas, I fear thou art amiss; and your bad deeds are like to bring trouble to us all. Your association with harlots in this place is the talk of the whole city, and everywhere we are threatened with violence—we can no longer preach to the people since they judge us all by your conduct, and condemn us all as

hypocrites and bid us be gone. The other brethren have started to leave the city, but I came in search of you; now brother, come—in God's name come! Come, let us leave together; by a penitent life you may yet cancel this great sin—you are young—not yet hardened in vice; I pray you, come!"

Corianton stood before his brother bewildered; to him his speech was incoherent—wild. "Shiblón," said he, "I have not associated with harlots, and though the revels of last night were indiscreet, I am free from such sin as you impute to me."

"God grant that you are, and far be it from me to believe that you add the sin of falsehood to a grosser sin; but brother, the house of Seantum where you have lodged, is the worst den of infamy in all Antionum, and only last night you were seen in loving converse on the shores of this very lake with the harlot Isabel."

"Isabel!" echoed Corianton, "I know and have seen no such woman. I walked through the grounds here last evening

with Joan, niece of Seantum, and though of sprightly disposition yet modest, and I believe as virtuous as she is fair."

"Oh, Corianton, in this you are cozened. That woman is not Joan, nor is she Seantum's niece; but a wicked harlot from Siron whose body to the chief men of this city has been as common as their wills have desired it; you have fallen into the trap laid by the Zoramites to destroy the mission in this city. Seantum is one of the leaders of the Zoramites, he it was who sent for this cunning harlot to work your ruin, and in that hoped for the destruction of our mission; and he has succeeded, alas! too well. They have deceived you; and as the devil appears as an angel of light, so this woman assumes a virtue that she possesses not, and by that seeming grace wins you to your destruction. But break this chain, and let us flee."

Before Corianton could reply there was heard a hurrying of feet and they were surrounded by a body of men.

"Take that man," said Seantum, point-

ing to Shiblon, "and bind him." The young man saw at a glance that neither flight nor resistance would avail anything, and he submitted without an effort at either.

"Corianton," said Seantum, "I overheard the ungracious words of your brother against my house and my kinswoman, and I insist upon a vindication of both before the magistrates of this city; hence I have taken him, but I mean him no further mischief; and does not justice to my great reputation and to my household dictate the taking of this course?"

"Though the sentence fall upon my brother, I must say your cause is just; let him answer it before your judges, and let this experience teach him discretion."

"Corianton," said Shiblon, "I complain not at my captivity, incurred by an anxiety for your good, nor shall I shrink before the judges however unjust or merciless they may be. But take my advice, if you are still free from the sin that reputation sticks on you, lose

no time in leaving this man's accursed house; trust not his friendship, for it is poison; believe not in the pretensions of the harlot Isabel, Joan she is not, she is one whose feet go down to death, whose steps take hold on hell!"

"Away with him, and stop his slanderous mouth!" cried Corianton, white with rage. One of those who held him, struck Shiblon a blow in the face.

"Noble Seantum," continued Corianton, "see that yourself and your fair niece be cleared of those slanders, and tell her that there is one Nephite at least who can rise above the prejudices of a narrow faith and not impute lewdness to mirthfulness, nor wantonness to innocent gaiety."

"Be assured, sir," replied the one addressed, "I shall not fail to report you truly to the fair Joan; and you shall not suffer in her estimation by reason of your brother's slander."

"Brother, you are now blinded by your infatuation and anger," said Shiblon, whose spirit neither blows nor pros-

pective harsher treatment could daunt, "but the time will come, when the scales will fall, and you will see the black wickedness of those who have entrapped your unwary feet; farewell, and whatever fate overtakes me, remember I suffer it out of love of you."

He was then dragged away in the direction of the house, followed by Seantum.

CHAPTER TEN.

TAUNTS OF THE CROWD.

Left alone to battle with the contending emotions that struggled in his breast, and his anger having subsided, Corianton began to be plagued with rising apprehensions. What if Shiblon were right? What if he had been duped by the crafty Zoramites? Many things that passed under his observation in the banqueting saloon the night before now arose to give support to his increasing fears. "Yet, I'll not believe it, until proven true, then if she be indeed a harlot, and hath betrayed me into this compromising position, may God pity her, for she hath need of pity!"

With these words he left the garden and started in the direction of the market place of the city.

He observed as he walked along that many people looked curiously at him, and turned to follow him with their gaze. As he turned into one of the principal

Taunts of the Crowd. 91

streets he heard a tumult, and saw an excited crowd of people rapidly gathering about two men who were evidently making efforts to extricate themselves from the throng. They were coming in his direction, and stepping aside into a narrow alleyway, he thought to let the throng pass without being observed. As the crowd drew near, to his astonishment, he saw the two men were his father and Ammon. The mob at their heels, however, was evidently, as yet, good natured, and were merely mocking them. Some who occasionally ran in front of them would shout at the spectators gathered at the sides of the streets—

"Behold the Nephite prophet, who comes to teach us 'holiness' while his son makes merry the night with harlots!"

"Teach your own son virtue before you leave your cities to convert the Zoramites," cried another.

"The son's no worse than the father I'll warrant," shouted a third.

"Nor so bad either," broke in several.

"Say old greybeard," said a voice from

the crowd, "which of you holy men is contracted to Isabel to-night?" and the insinuation was followed by shouts of laughter.

So the crowd passed on, yelling, cursing, mocking, deriding, pushing; the spirit of violence constantly increasing. The two prophets answered nothing, but bore all meekly; the only sign of emotion being the tears that silently flowed down the furrowed cheeks of Alma at the taunts thrown at him respecting his son; indeed he seemed weighed down with grief, and would have been trampled under foot but for the support of his strong companion, who bore him up, and kept back those who would have used violence had they dared.

The crowd passed and their shouts rose faintly above the busy hum of life in the city, and then at last died away altogether.

Corianton had remained in the alleyway from which he had seen and heard what is described above; there he stood trembling from head to foot in an agony

of shame and terror. At last he walked away, and rather from instinct than design he retraced his footsteps in the direction of Seantum's.

CHAPTER ELEVEN.

FACE TO FACE.

As he walked along Corianton increased his speed; passion rocked his frame, and a deep design for revenge filled his heart. He passed down the path with rapid strides and entered the hall of Seantum's dwelling. Here he met a maid who had attended on Joan—Isabel,—and in whose company he had left her the night before.

"Where is your mistress, maid?" he demanded in no gentle tones.

"She is yet in her room, sir prophet," said the maid, trembling with fear.

"And where is that room?"

"The first door to the left opens to a passage leading to it; shall I say to my mistress you would see her?"

"No," he replied in tones husky with anger. "I will see her unannounced. Small need to stand on ceremony with such as she."

And with a few rapid strides he

reached the door indicated, and entered the passage leading to the splendid rooms set apart for the use of Isabel.

He threw aside the heavy curtain drawn across the passage and stood in the presence of the woman bent on his destruction. She was seated on a low ottoman with a silver mirror in her hand and a slave was just putting the finishing touches to her toilet. She hastily arose as Corianton entered, and intense anger flashed in her dark eyes.

"Methinks this entrance is somewhat rude, bold Nephite. At least I should have thought a 'prophet' would have had respect for a maiden's privacy."

"Aye, no doubt he would. All men would respect a maiden's privacy; the most licentious wretch would tremble did he invade its hallowed precinct. But who respects the privacy of a commoner? Who pauses on the threshold of a strumpet?"

"Commoner? Strumpet?" echoed Isabel, choking with rage, "what mean you?"

"Mean? mean?" he cried, "I mean that the mask behind which you would hide as Joan is snatched away. I mean that you are a base harlot; that that fair face is besmirked with loathsome filth, that the sweet tones of your voice, the arch smile, that angel form, are but the blandishments of hell to decoy men to ruin. I mean that you with your paramours conspired to work my undoing; and I, fool-like, must walk in midday light into your traps."

He had approached her at this climax of his passion and seized her by the throat! With a shriek she sank upon her knees before him in terror. Finding her helpless in his grasp, he recovered his self-control sufficiently to loose his hold.

"No. no, I will not kill you—I meant not to harm you—pardon me. O, my God! why, oh why, is this woman so foul and yet so fair that heated rage is cooled, madness subdued to gentleness, and man's purposed revenge weeps itself to softness in woman's tears?" Covering his face with his hands he sank

into a settee overpowered by the emotions which shook his frame.

By this time Isabel had recovered from the terror into which Corianton's sudden rage had thrown her; and deeply read in man's moods and passions, she saw what an influence she held over the one now before her. Stealing softly to his side, and placing her hand on his shoulder she gently said:

"Corianton, have you done well in thus proceeding? What have I done to merit such harsh treatment—such bitter words—how deserved it?"

"What have you done?" he cried—"you came to me with a lie on your lips, deceit in your heart, and under the guise of innocence, purity and goodness sought to encompass my ruin!—Well madame, your plans have carried—I am undone—ruined! I can never return to my people, to them I am infamous—an outcast!" And again his form was convulsed in an agony of grief.

"But may there not be some extenuating circumstances to free me from

the harsh judgment you passed upon me? Trained from my childhood to hate your people, and taught that all means were proper that would lead to their destruction, the helpless instrument of unscrupulous men bent on defeating your mission to the Zoramites—is it any wonder that I undertook the part assigned me in the scheme? But ‘Corianton,’ and she sank on her knees at his feet, “the moment I saw you—so noble in bearing—so young—my heart relented; I shrank from the performance of the wicked plot—but what was I to do? Had I told you the truth—that I was Isabel—the infamy of that name would have steeled your heart against me—you would have driven me from you as an unclean thing; and your presence—the nobility which looked from your eyes, inspired me with love such as I have never known before—I experienced a longing for something better than I had known—a desire for purity, goodness, virtue, that I might be worthy of you; and even wicked and unclean as I am,

hope whispered high promises to my woman’s heart—‘love will forgive and forget the past; it lives only in the present and for the future,’ it said; but alas! it was a vain hope—I awake and find it dust! Oh, why is there so much difference between man and woman! No matter what the past of a man may have been, he hath but to repent, and all is forgiven—and, forgotten. But when a woman falls, ’tis never more to rise or be forgiven.”

These indirect appeals to him touched the gentler nature of Corianton, and bending over her as he took her hand, he said: “Nay, do not weep; if I have fallen I alone am to blame, I should have had better discretion. I am no coward to lay the blame upon another. I alone am to blame and I will alone bear the burden of God’s displeasure.”

“Corianton,” cried Isabel as a sudden idea seized her, “if you are an outcast; come to me, go with me to Siron; we are both young, we may live for each other, and life may yield us much of

happiness—I will be true to you, work for you, nay, my proud spirit is conquered by my love, I will even be your slave; let us unite our shattered fortunes: all may yet be well.”

Oh youth, how elastic is thy texture! Oppressed with the heaviest grief, bowed down into the dust by ruin, thy buoyancy will up-raise the soul—hope dwells perennially in thy breast! The proposition of Isabel revived the sinking spirits of Corianton, and under the influence of her hopeful words his life yet seemed to promise something worth living for.

“If you have become an outcast from your people,” she continued, “and that through me, I will become an outcast from those who knew me here, I will forsake my friends for you; and then, hand in hand, we will seek our new and better fortune. But men are changeable in their love,” she added, “and when time or care steals beauty from our cheeks, your eyes will wander—swear to be true to me, Corianton.”

Her arms stole gently about his neck

and she looked pleadingly into his eyes. All his love for this woman now seemed to go out to her, and warmly returning her tender embrace he said:

“Do not fear the vanishing of my love, Isabel, for I do love thee with my whole heart, better than my country, my people or my God—the last I am estranged from, and henceforth thou shalt be my idol,” and he lovingly kissed her lips.

That night they left for Siron, and reached their destination.

The following day when it became known that Corianton had gone to Siron with Isabel, the excitement in Antionum greatly increased. Shiblon the day before had been released from his bondage and was stoned by the people in the streets, led on by some of the servants of Scantum. He escaped them, however, and joined his father and brethren, and told them of the blind infatuation of Corianton.

It was decided that it would be useless to attempt to preach longer to the people of Antionum, and that evening the

brethren of the mission departed for the land of Jershon, their spirits bowed down with grief at the hardness of the hearts of the Zoramites; but sorrowing most of all for the wickedness of Corianton and the disgrace he had brought upon the work.

Zoram and his associates, chief among whom was Seantum, were not satisfied with the departure of the Nephite prophets; but formed the resolution of driving from their midst those who had believed in their words. Hence they sent among the people secretly to find out those who believed in the words which Alma and his companions had taught; and learned the sentiments of those who disbelieved their teachings. The reports justified them in concluding they could drive the former out of their land with impunity. The effort was successful; and the outcasts fled to Jershon where the people of Ammon received them with gladness, and provided for their immediate wants.

CHAPTER TWELVE.

THE LOVE OF A WANTON.

The home of Isabel, in Siron, was nearly as magnificent as that of Seantum in Antionum. All that wealth could do to satisfy the caprice and extravagant tastes of woman, had evidently been lavished upon Isabel by her lovers. For two days after the arrival from Antionum she had been all that could be desired by Corianton—loving, gentle, and at times sprightly. But the morning of the third day when he suggested leaving her establishment, whose luxury constantly reminded him of her former life and shame, she manifested some petulance, and replied—

“You knew who and what I was before you came here, I take it unkindly that you upbraid me for the past.”

The fact was that during the night Zoram had arrived from Antionum and was filled with jealous rage. He feared the

young and handsome Nephite had won the fancy of his mistress, and demanded that he should be gotten rid of.

About midday Corianton entered the apartments of Isabel and urged again that she would consent to leave Siron and go to a land where she was not known and there begin their new life.

"There is the door," she said coolly, "if you like not to stay, you may go."

"Nay, Isabel, but you promised that you would forsake all this for me!"

"And are you so simple as to believe a woman's words? I was blinded by my infatuation and half repentance, but the dream is past, I am myself again, and see we are not suited to each other; you had better return to your people, sir prophet, fall down at their feet, and seek their forgiveness."

He stood amazed—twice deceived and by this woman—twice damned in shame for a thing scarce worth his pity!

"And is this the return for my great love for you?" he asked.

"That for your love," and she threw a

goblet of wine in his face. "I despise both you and your love."

Several of the servants and Zoram entering the apartment at that moment, she threw herself into the arms of the latter, saying as she kissed him, "this is my love—my prince—my king of men! Now go!" she cried, pointing to the door.

"Not I," replied Corianton; "I will not budge until I have laid him dead at my feet who set on foot the plan that brought my shame!" And he sprang at Zoram with the fury of an enraged tiger. Before he could reach him, however, he was overpowered by the servants and bound securely. Zoram had drawn his dagger, and would have killed the Nephite, but Isabel clung to him.

"No, no, you shall not slay him, he is my prey, and 'tis for me to say what shall be his fate. Nephite," she said; "our friend Korihor went into your chief city where, through sorcery, he was smitten dumb and fled from your land. He returned to us half crazed, and miserably perished. That, your people

said, was a judgment of God,—a manifestation of his almighty power. Now live, return to your people to be the scorn and shame of the times, and let them know that your fall is a manifestation of Isabel's power—let it be Corianton for Korihor—Isabel against your God!"

* * *

"See that a number of servants go with him as guards and take him to the borders of the land Jershon," said Zoram. "Come, move, slaves, away with him, and be not over-tender of him in your journey!"

Two men were soon mounted, and Corianton, his hands bound behind him, was compelled to run between them, each of his guards holding him by a thong fastened about his body. All that day and night, and part of the next day they continued their journey, with occasional rests for themselves and their horses. Reaching the borders of the land of Jershon before noon of the second day, they cruelly beat their prisoner and left him, directing their course for Siron.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN.

A BROTHER'S LOVE.

Left more dead than alive by his hard journey and merciless beating, Corianton lay in a stupor for some time. Regaining consciousness he wandered, he knew not whither, but at last came to one of the chief towns of the people of Ammon; where a large number of the outcast Zoramites had been given a resting place. In passing through the streets he was recognized by some of them, and the news of his return soon spread throughout the city.

The people came running together to see him. Some looked on him with pity, others looked upon him as the author of all their distress and began clamoring for vengeance. The latter class was by far the more numerous, and the excitement was growing uncontrollable. "Stone him, stone him!" was the cry. Corianton, hard pressed, threw

back his tattered robe, and addressing the crowd said—

“Yes, good people, I am the cause of the affliction that has befallen you—let my life pay the penalty of my follies—I refuse not to die—to die would be relief.”

Those who heard these words, and saw the majesty of the speaker, fallen though he was, were awed into silence; but those on the outskirts of the ever-increasing crowd still clamored for his life, and even began to cast stones at him. These volleys soon caused those near him to draw back, and he stood alone. Shrouding his face in his mantle he sank to the ground prepared to meet the worst.

At that moment a clear, strong voice rose above the tumult of the mob: “In the name of God, hold! Stay your hands, men! Let him be accursed that casts another stone!”

Shiblon, all breathless, pushed his way through that angry crowd to where his brother lay, half stunned and bleed-

ing. He threw aside the mantle and bent over the poor, bruised form. “Alas! my brother, cast down and well nigh destroyed!” and the tears flowed down his cheeks and dropped upon the half unconscious face of Corianton. Then the murmurs of the crowd, awed but for the moment by Shiblon's appearance, rose into cries for vengeance. Quickly rising to his feet, Shiblon waved his hand for silence and thus addressed them:

“You people from Antionum, listen to me. My father and the sons of Mosiah, together with this my brother and myself, came into your midst to teach you the truth. Out of love for you my father, though bowed with age and unremitting toil in the behalf of others, left the pleasures and comforts of his home, risked his life, and endured the scoffs of the proud Zoramites, that you might live, and live in the truth, and be free; and for this you would reward him by slaying his dearest son, who fell by the practice of a cunning harlot. I grant you

the sin was great; such as he are great, even in their sins; and they are likewise great in their sufferings.

"If his crime is worthy of death, has he not already suffered more than death? The burden of his great sin he must carry through life—and could his worst enemy be gratified by casting one more stone at this poor, bleeding body, or be pleased by adding one more pang to his tortured mind? Oh, men! has pity, mercy, gratitude left your breasts; and does your mad frenzy make you brutish beasts? My brother's sin is more against himself and God than you, and it is for you to leave him to the justice and mercy of his God who hath said, 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay.'"

The crowd slunk away, except those who remained to assist Shiblon in removing his brother to the home of Ammon, who lived in the city. Here his wounds were dressed; and he was attended upon by Shiblon with all the devotion of a loving brother.

His father forgave him, and took no

small pains in teaching him, instilling into his soul faith in the great fundamental truths of the Gospel. And Corianton's proud, haughty spirit now humbled to the dust, listened with prayerful attention to the instruction of his father, and found the faith of the Gospel the stay and hope of his soul, and no longer questioned, but lovingly trusted in the justice and mercy of God.

May it not be that even this great sin was necessary to humble his pride, and prepare him to receive and sense the gospel, that by and through it he might be prepared to receive the highest degree of glory to which his nature could attain, and which he never could have attained with his pride unbroken?

"I give unto men weakness," saith the Lord, "that they may be humble; and my grace is sufficient for all men that humble themselves before me."

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"So here hath been dawning
Another blue day;

Think, how wilt thou let it
Slip useless away?

Out of eternity

This new day is born;

Into eternity

Our night doth return."

Thomas Carlyle.

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